

CD2004--29/30

Wednesday, February 25, 2004
8 pm. Walter Hall

University of Toronto
Faculty of Music
Presents

University of Toronto Baroque Orchestra

Jeanne Lamon, conductor

PROGRAMME

J.C. Bach
(1735-1782)

Symphony in G minor, Op. 6 No. 6
Allegro
Andante piu tosto
Allegro molto

W.A. Mozart
(1756-1791)

Symphony in G, KV 183
Allegro con brio
Andante
Minuetto
Allegro

INTERMISSION

A. Mozart

Symphony in E-flat, KV 543
Adagio-Allegro
Andante con moto
Minuetto
Presto

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Programme Notes

Symphony in G minor Op. 6 No. 6

JOHANN CHRISTIAN BACH

Born in Leipzig, 1735

Died in London, 1782

The youngest surviving son of the great J.S. Bach, Johann Christian was only 15 years old when his father died in 1750. The young Bach spent the next four years of his life studying with his older brother, Carl Philipp Emanuel, in Berlin, subsequently continuing his education in Italy. Converting to Roman Catholicism, he served for two years as an organist in Milan's cathedral.

In 1762 Johann Christian relocated to London, where he was appointed music master to the Queen. He lived there for the rest of his life, composing operas and concert repertoire, organizing musical events and teaching. At the height of his fame, "the London Bach" was celebrated throughout Europe: he was commissioned by the Paris Opéra and by the renowned Mannheim Court Orchestra. In partnership with Carl Friedrich Abel he built the Hanover Square rooms, and assumed the responsibilities (and risks) of running a concert hall. Unfortunately this enterprise brought him to financial ruin. In 1781 his health began to fail, and the following year died, in debt, at the age of 46.

Johann Christian received a thorough training in baroque compositional techniques from his father, but in his own music he was drawn to the lighter-textured *gallant* style of eighteenth-century Neapolitan opera. A prolific composer, he wrote about 90 symphonies throughout his career: this one was published in 1770, although the exact date of its composition is unknown.

According to the musicologist Charles Sanford Terry, "By the middle of eighteenth century, the symphony was an orchestral sonata, almost invariably in three movements – the first, a busy *Allegro*, the second an *Andante* or *Largo*, and the third a lively

Vivace or *Allegro* – for the most part written for a chamber orchestra in eight parts – two violins, viola, bass, two flutes (or oboes) and two horns." Broadly speaking, Terry's statement is borne out in this work – although on closer inspection this *Symphony in G Minor* is hardly a textbook example of symphonic form.

The first movement begins with a dramatic little theme, abruptly followed by a lyrical second theme in the relative major. But in the recapitulation, it is the *second* theme that returns first (this time in G minor), followed by material from the first theme. The second movement, with its lilting melodies, is disarmingly simple in its textures. This piece owes much to standard "AB" binary form – except that here the "B" section is developmental rather than contrasting in character. The last movement, a tiny proto-sonata, is infused with the spirit of Italian opera.

Symphony No. 25 in G Minor K. 183

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Born in Salzburg, Austria, 1756

Died in Vienna, 1791

In 1773 Mozart and his father visited Vienna, with the hope of obtaining a court appointment for the 17-year-old composer. The young Mozart was already a veteran of Europe's concert circuit, and in the course of his travels he had developed polyglot language skills. To his sister, he playfully wrote in a mixture of French, German, Italian and Latin: "Hodie nous avons begegnet per strada Dominum Edlbach welcher uns di voi compliments ausgerichtet hat, et qui sich tibi et ta mere Empfehlen läst." ("Today we met in the street Mr. Edlbach, who brought us greetings from you, and who wishes to be remembered to you and your mother.") Similarly, his exposure to many styles of music lent his works a cosmopolitan flavour: a mixture of

Italian opera and Viennese *Sturm und Drang*, synthesized (unlike his humorous linguistic pastiche) into a cohesive whole.

This symphony (sometimes called the "Little" symphony in G minor, to distinguish it from Mozart's *Symphony No. 40*) was completed just after Mozart returned to his home city of Salzburg after his three-month stay in Vienna. Some mystery surrounds this work: neither the specific reason for its composition nor the occasion of its premiere have been established. By the standards of the 1770s, the orchestra is somewhat unusual, containing oboes and bassoons in pairs, timpani, and no less than four horns (two in G and two in B-flat).

The first movement is in sonata form. Its first theme sharply contrasts the dramatic *Sturm und Drang* intensity with a lyrical oboe solo. But rather than introduce new material in the second theme, Mozart re-works ideas from the first theme in the relative major key – a simple but strikingly transformative device. The *Andante*, in E-flat major, prominently features the bassoons. Even though this movement is in a major key, it is wistful rather than sunny. What then follows is a rather austere and sombre *Minuetto* – although the trio section, scored for winds only, is charming and delightful. In the finale, Mozart returns to sonata form, and to the unsettled, syncopated character of the opening movement.

While in Vienna, the Mozarts were granted an audience with the Empress Maria Theresa in Vienna, but no court position was forthcoming. It seems that the precocious young Wolfgang and his transparently ambitious father succeeded in somehow rubbing the Empress the wrong way. The family left the Austrian capital empty-handed, and proceeded to try their luck in Germany.

Symphony No. 39 in E-flat Major K. 543
WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART
Born in Salzburg, Austria, 1756
Died in Vienna, 1791

It is often said that the last years of Mozart's life were not happy, and for good reason. In 1787 his father – a difficult man, but also a knowledgeable teacher and guiding hand – passed away; his fourth child died six months after her birth, and his wife, Constanze, required constant medical treatment. His life as a freelance composer in Vienna was, at best, precarious, and his debts mounted. By 1788 he had begun to beg for loans from his friends. "If you could or would lend me 100 gulden until the 20th of next month, I would be much obliged," he pleaded with one. "I have to admit it is not possible for me to repay right now the money I owe you," he apologized to another. Nevertheless, in the last years of his life, he wrote some of the greatest music ever penned: *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte*, and *Die Zauberflöte*; the *Clarinet Quintet*, the "King of Prussia" *Quartet*, the *Requiem* – and the symphonies 39, 40 and 41, composed during a six-week period in June of 1788.

The *Symphony in E-flat Major, K. 543* is unique amongst his final symphonic works. Its first movement begins with a stately *Adagio* introduction before leaping into an energetic and concise *Allegro*. While consistent with the tonal structures of classical sonata form – the second theme initially appears the dominant key, with both themes later returning in the tonic – unusually, it is the second theme that provides the material for the development section. The second movement is a rondo marked *Andante* in A-flat major, containing excursions to remote keys, such as B major and B minor. Mozart omits the trumpets and timpani altogether, and deliberately delays his use of the other wind instruments. Its main theme is elegant and uncomplicated, and Mozart manipulates it with contrapuntal expertise. The minuet is bright and bold, and

the trio section has an almost waltz-like quality, featuring the clarinets prominently. The last movement, a lively *Presto*, is built on two themes that are similar rather than contrasting: a device Mozart acquired from Haydn. The sudden pauses and off-beat rhythms are also reminiscent of Mozart's mentor, and again there are excursions to remote keys.

Mozart's fortunes did not rise after 1788 – on the contrary, they worsened when Emperor Joseph II died and the new emperor pointedly ignored him. And yet Mozart somehow managed to avoid despair: his last known letter, to his wife, speaks glowingly of the success of *Die Zauberflöte*. Less than two months later, he was dead.
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Jeanne Lamon

Music Director of Tafelmusik since 1981, **Jeanne Lamon** has been praised by critics in Europe and North America for her virtuosity as a violinist and her strong musical leadership. Under her direction, Tafelmusik has achieved international stature and is considered one of the best ensembles in its field.

Jeanne Lamon teaches at the University of Toronto and Toronto's Royal Conservatory of Music. She received an honorary Doctor of Letters from York University in 1994. In 1996 Ms. Lamon became the first recipient of the Muriel Sherrin Award, which is presented by the Toronto Arts Council Foundation to artists and creators who have excelled at international initiatives in the fields of music or dance. In 1997 the Alliance Française of Toronto awarded Ms Lamon with its newly created *Prix Alliance* for her contributions to

cultural exchanges and artistic ties between Canada and France. In September 1997 Ms. Lamon received the Joan Chalmers Award for Creativity and Excellence in the Arts for her artistic direction of Tafelmusik. Jeanne Lamon received the Canada Council's prestigious Molson Prize in 1999 for her lifelong commitment to the arts and excellence in her field. In July 2000 Ms. Lamon was appointed a member of the Order of Canada in recognition of her exceptional achievements as a baroque violinist, teacher, and Music Director of Tafelmusik.

Jeanne Lamon has recorded for Philips, Nonesuch, The Musical Heritage Society, Titanic Records, Collegium Records, CBC Records, BMG/Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, Analekta and Sony Classical.

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Kenneth Peacock was a distinguished alumnus of the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music. His body of work, as a composer and researcher for half a century, has made a significant impact on musical life in Canada. The Faculty of Music was very grateful to learn that Mr. Peacock had made a bequest to the University of Toronto in his will for the benefit of our music programs. With this legacy gift, the Faculty of Music will establish the Kenneth H. Peacock Lecture Series in Music in keeping with his lifelong interest in and contribution to the multi-dimensional study of music. Thank you Mr. Peacock.

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